



MEETING DATE:02/17/04

ITEM NO. 4

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2004
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: DEBRA J. FIGONE, TOWN MANAGER
SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PERMANENT TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES FOR THE HIGHLAND OAKS-CHIRCO-PLACER OAKS AREA NEIGHBORHOOD

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of permanent traffic calming measures for the Highand Oaks-Chirco-Placer Oaks area neighborhood.

BACKGROUND:

A trial traffic calming process for this neighborhood was approved by Council on February 18, 2003, after neighborhood meetings, votes and communications that spanned twenty-two months, from March, 2001 to January 2003. The neighborhood's request for traffic calming was to slow vehicle speeds. The posted speed limit is 25MPH. Traffic data collected in 2001 and 2002 indicated the 85th percentile vehicle speeds on individual street speeds averaged 30.5MPH, ranging from 27.5MPH to 33.5MPH. As there are no sidewalks in many parts of this neighborhood, the vehicle speeds concerned pedestrians who walk alongside the edge of the roadway. Thus, staff worked with the neighborhood to identify methods to slow traffic and increase pedestrian safety for this neighborhood.

The outcome of the several neighborhood meetings held during 2001 and 2002 was the development of a trial traffic calming proposal that had nine (9) devices. A neighborhood vote was conducted in January, 2003 to determine if 67% of the neighborhood supported the whole, or parts of, this proposal. That neighborhood vote's outcome indicated only seven (7) of the nine (9) devices obtained the necessary 67% support vote: The speed humps on Izorah Way and Corinne Drive did not have the required support vote. A notice was sent to the entire neighborhood in January, 2003, with this vote outcome.

PREPARED BY: John E. Curtis, Director, Parks and Public Works

Reviewed by: Assistant Town Manager, Attorney, Clerk, Finance, Community Development. Revised: 2/10/04 11:08 am

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Staff subsequently received a petition from Corinne Drive residents indicating they collected the necessary 67% support. However, staff determined it should not supercede the official vote and that it was very possible additional speed humps would not be necessary as the other traffic devices may slow traffic in the entire area. As a potential cost savings could also be realized, staff recommended a two-phased approach to address the Corinne Drive residents' concerns that traffic volumes and speeds would be moved over to their street. Phase One was to install the seven options, and after three months to collect new data. If the new traffic data indicated increased speeds or volumes on either Corinne or Izorah Way, staff was to initiate Phase Two to install speed humps as soon as feasible on either of those streets. Council approved this recommendation in February, 2003

DISCUSSION:

The seven trial traffic calming options were installed in March, 2003 and tested for several months. New traffic data was collected in September, 2003, indicating all streets' speeds were reduced to below 30MPH, and no significant change in volumes occurred (except on Highland Oaks as intended during commute times). There was no evidence that any speeding or volumes were transferred to Corinne or Izorah. In fact, speeds were reduced as much as 5.5 MPH on some streets. New vehicle speeds range from 26MPH to 29MPH on the various streets in this neighborhood. The new data indicates the various traffic calming devices tested were successful in reducing vehicle speeds.

To determine if there is super-majority (67%) neighborhood support for the trial devices to become permanent, a second neighborhood vote was conducted in October, 2003. The following is a summary of the permanent traffic calming vote outcome:

<u>Returned Votes by Option</u>	<u>Overall Vote Entire Area's Percentage of Votes in Favor</u>	<u>Area Street Vote Option's Area % of Votes in Favor</u>
<u>Option A:</u> Eastbound Lark Ave at Highland Oaks; "No Left Turn 4PM-7PM"	82%	88%
<u>Option B:</u> Highland Oaks at Oak Park; 3-way stop	86%	82%
<u>Option C:</u> Garden Lane; One Speed Hump	86%	80%
<u>Option D:</u> Benedict Lane; Two Speed Humps	84%	89%
<u>Option E:</u> Chirco Drive; Traffic Circle	68%	67%
<u>Option F:</u> Placer Oaks at Oak Rim; Raised Intersection	85%	67%
<u>Option G:</u> Izorah & Flintridge; White edgeline	93%	80%

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As indicated in the chart above, all options received the required 67% support vote, or more. Staff is satisfied the Phase One devices are sufficient in reducing speeding and additional Phase Two traffic calming measures are not needed elsewhere in the neighborhood. A notice was sent November 24, 2003, concerning the outcome of this vote to the area neighborhood (Attachment 1).

Numerous comments were received with the ballots, in which two issues were identified: Option E, the traffic circle's size and stark appearance and Option A, the turn restriction's need during commute days only (currently restriction is everyday). Staff agrees with the neighborhood's concerns, and proposes to design the permanent traffic circle to be slightly smaller and have a better appearance, with the input of the nearby residents, and to change the turn restriction to weekdays only. The traffic circle would be constructed using hardscape, not with landscaping.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends approval of permanent traffic calming measures in this large neighborhood. Residents contributed to this process, including neighborhood meetings and two neighborhood votes. Staff considers this project has been proven successful, as demonstrated by the traffic data and the neighborhood votes. (Attachment 2)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The following is the cost of this project's devices:

<u>MATERIALS:</u>	<u>Trial Period</u>	<u>Permanent</u>
Speed humps, asphalt (3)	\$ 7,161	
Traffic circle	\$ 1,500 (rubberized)	\$12,000 (concrete)
Raised intersection, asphalt	\$ 8,937	
Signs, edgeline & painting	<u>\$ 7,004</u>	
Total Project Cost	<u>\$ 24,602</u>	<u>\$36,602</u>

Funds are available in this year's traffic calming program budget (Account #400-0208) to install the permanent traffic circle (\$12,000). The Traffic Calming budget has a current balance of \$58,864 for this fiscal year. Additionally, a private development project on Los Gatos Boulevard has contributed \$5,000 toward the traffic calming circle.

Attachments:

1. Notice November 24, 2003 to Neighborhood Regarding Vote Outcome
2. Permanent Traffic Calming Plan





November 24, 2003

## INFORMATION NOTICE

### Re: Highland Oaks-Chirco-Placer Oaks Neighborhood Traffic Calming Vote Outcome

Residents of the area from Highland Oaks to Placer Oaks, between Los Gatos Blvd. and Highway 17 were recently sent a ballot asking whether or not to have the various trial traffic calming devices become permanent. Many of you may recall these devices were installed in an effort to see if they would reduce vehicle speeds. The devices were developed by residents of your neighborhood; they were the outcome of several neighborhood meetings and a previous neighborhood vote in December 2002, were approved by the Town Council in February, 2003 and installed in April, 2003. The process and procedure followed the Town's Traffic Calming Policy, (available at [www.town.los-gatos.ca.us/services/lc.html](http://www.town.los-gatos.ca.us/services/lc.html) or by calling 408/399-5770 to obtain a copy).

#### Background:

Previous to their installation, traffic data was collected several times, indicating **there was significant speeding: the average 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds were over 30MPH**; vehicle speeds collected on the various streets ranged from 33.5MPH to 27.5MPH. The speed limit is 25 MPH. Additionally, a special traffic study (an "origin-destination" license plate study) determined drivers are from this neighborhood and are not outside "cut-through" traffic. **A comprehensive approach was needed** for your large neighborhood with many entry points. Also, devices were placed where high speeds were occurring. After the trial devices were installed and tested, (including speed humps, raised intersection, restricted turns and stop signs), new traffic data was collected indicating **85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds have reduced, ranging from 26MPH to 29MPH, a reduction of up to five and a half (5.5) MPH on some streets, a significant decrease in vehicle speeds.** Additionally, the turn restriction on Highland Oaks reduced traffic volumes there as intended, while many other street volumes remained the same. This data indicates the devices reduced speeds as proposed. (Note: Corinne Drive was not approved for trial speed humps because their area's vote in December 2002 did not have the necessary 67% support. New traffic data indicates the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds on Corinne have reduced from 31.5 to 29 MPH).

#### The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Ballot Proposal:

The recent ballot asked residents to vote "YES" or "NO" on having the devices to become permanent. Of the three hundred four (304) ballots sent to residents in your designated traffic calming area, one hundred forty-eight (148) ballots were returned, indicating a forty-nine percent (49%) return rate, (a very good representative vote).

#### The Vote Outcome:

The overall voting outcome was as follows:

Percentage Votes in Favor:

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OPTION A: Eastbound Lark Ave at Highland Oaks; "No Left Turn 4PM-7PM"	82%
OPTION B: Highland Oaks at Oak Park; 3-way stop	86%
OPTION C: Garden Lane; One Speed Hump	86%
OPTION D: Benedict Lane; Two Speed Humps	84%
OPTION E: Chirco Drive; Traffic Circle	68%
OPTION F: Placer Oaks at Oak Rim; Raised Intersection	85%
OPTION G: Izorah Way & Flintridge; White Edgelines	93%

Additionally, the voting outcome was sorted by area near each device, as follows:

OPTION A: (Lark Ave Turn Restriction onto Highland Oaks)	88% in favor
OPTION B: (Highland Oaks/Oak Park 3-way stop)	82% in favor
OPTION C: (Garden Lane Speed Hump)	80% in favor
OPTION D: (Benedict Lane Speed Humps)	89% in favor
OPTION E: (Chirco Drive Traffic Circle)	67 % in favor
OPTION F: (Placer Oaks/Oak Rim Raised Intersection)	67% in favor
OPTION G: (Izorah & Flintridge-white edgeline)	80% in favor

Your neighborhood vote outcome, by both large and adjacent area, indicates the required 67% support is present for all these devices to become permanent. Specifically, the speed humps, raised intersection, stop and turn restriction signs would remain as they are placed now, whereas the rubberized-curb traffic circle would be replaced with a permanent, cement-formed traffic circle. The feasibility of landscaping will be discussed in a report to Town Council.

Comments Received:

Of the 149 ballots received, eighty (80) had various comments. The most common comments addressed two issues: the traffic circle and the turn restriction at Lark onto Highland Oaks. The traffic circle comments included its appearance and size. (Note: the temporary rubber curbs are used to provide an inexpensive method to try this device. A permanent traffic circle would be constructed in cement, including "rolled curbs" and river rock). The turn restriction comments requested to limit the restriction to Monday through Friday. **Staff will recommend to modify both the traffic circle and turn restriction**, to a slightly smaller size and better appearance, and restrict turning to Monday to Friday only, respectively. Staff will also propose to design the traffic circle with the input of the nearby residents.

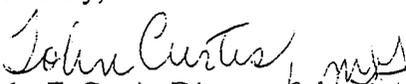
Summary:

The **Town's Traffic Calming Policy** is intended to address neighborhood traffic issues with consensus as the key ingredient. Residents create a draft solution with the expertise of the Town's Traffic Engineer, present it to their neighbors, and must obtain a super-majority support of residents for both the trial and permanent solution (as indicated by a neighborhood vote), for it to go forward to Council for consideration and approval. It is a **policy where consensus - not a majority but a 67% super-majority - must support the solution**. Not all residents will be in agreement, but each residence will have an opportunity to voice their opinion and be heard (both during the development and vote process, where one vote per residence is allowed). Because a super-majority is required to move a proposal forward, the neighborhood is represented in the fairest manner possible. The process is long and ensures many residents support it. Your neighborhood has participated effectively in this process.

Next Steps:

Your neighborhood now has a final traffic calming proposal (permanent traffic calming devices). **The next step in the traffic calming review process is for staff to present a report to Town Council with an update** of the outcome of the test period (new data indicating reduced speeds) and the recent vote (indicating support for devices to become permanent). This staff report will be scheduled in the upcoming months, possibly February or March, 2004. If approved by Council, the devices will become permanent and the neighborhood traffic calming process will be completed. If you would like to be informed of the upcoming Council report date, or have any other questions, please contact the Parks and Public Works Department Analyst, Mary Gillespie-Greenberg at (408) 399-5776.

Sincerely,

  
John E. Curtis, Director  
Parks and Public Works Department

# CHIRCO NEIGHBORHOOD AREA – Proposed Permanent Traffic Calming Plan

- A** A "no right-turn 4 PM to 7 PM MON-FRI" sign restricting right-turn from Lark to Highland Oaks.
- B** A 3-way stop at Highland Oaks/Oak Park.
- C** Speed hump for Benedict and Garden Lane.
- D** A traffic circle island at Chirco/Benedict.
- E** A raised intersection at Placer Oaks/Oak Rim.
- F** White edgelines for Izorah from Placer Oaks to Frank, Flintridge, and Chirco from Flintridge to Corinne.

